

Claim 4 (original): A flexible ladder according to claim 1 wherein the flexible vertical member is selected from the group consisting of a rope, nylon cord, a strap, a cable, a chain and a length of flexible material.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A flexible ladder according to claim 4 wherein the horizontal support platform is a wooden dowel and the vertical member is a length of rope.

Claim 6 (currently amended) A flexible ladder climbing apparatus for a playground comprising at least three ropes and a plurality of platform steps held in position on the ropes by a thermoplastic sleeve that is heat shrunk around the rope.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): A method of assembling a flexible ladder, said method comprising sequentially threading a flexible vertical member through a bore in a step and then a heat-shrinkable tubular sleeve until a desired ladder length is achieved and then applying heat to shrink the sleeve thereby preventing the step from moving on the rope in response to downward pressure.

REMARKS

The applicant affirms that a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of group 1 as defined in claims 1 to 6 and claim 7 has therefore been withdrawn from consideration at this time. We retain the right to pursue the subject matter in a divisional application.

The examiner rejected claims 1, 3 and 4 as being anticipated by Heilskov '708. Claim 1 submitted herewith has been amended to include the limitations of former claims 2 and 3 and to specify that the support platform is a rigid platform that is prevented from slipping down by a heat-shrinkable stop member. It is submitted that Heilskov '708 does not teach a stop member of heat-shrinkable